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25X1X The Soviet War Fleet on the Danube

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- The Soviet war fleet on the Danube numbered about 60 large and small ships in mid-March. There were about 20 large vessels, and the remainder were mostly of the corvette type. The most important of the large ships were as follows:
KENTCH, a monitor
ROSTOV, a monitor
MATSIN, used as the flagship. It was formerly Rumanian and was based at Ismail. It is accompanied by five or six corvettes when on duty.
 - The corvettes were about 20 meters long, with a beam of four meters. Their height above the surface of the water was about 0.80 meter, with a total height of two meters. The number of these corvettes did not exceed 10, and they were mostly used as patrol boats in the region between Bulcov (Canal Ismail) to the mouth of the Prut River, a distance of about 160 kilometers. Some patrol boats were occasionally sent farther north.
 - Each corvette carried one cannon of 22 mm. diameters mounted forward. This cannon had four barrels and could be used as an anti-aircraft gun. The steel plate armor of the corvette was 4 mm. (sic) thick.
 - The crew consisted of 12 men including the captain who had the rank of lieutenant (j.g.). There was one non-commissioned officer, and the rest were seamen. The speed of these corvettes was about 25 kilometers per hour when going upstream. They were not named but had numbers. The numbers were not in series, but ranged between 1 and 196.
 - The harbor of Ismail was used as a naval station although the use of the northern part of Caslita Island which lies at the 73rd kilometer above Ismail was also being considered. North of this island and all along its length dredging was begun in 1945 and is still going on. The Russians anchored their fleet along the northern part of this island during the past winter.

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The Soviet Merchant Fleet on the Danube

6. The present merchant fleet on the Danube numbers about 600 ships. These ships are of three kinds: passenger boats, tugs and barges. The following ships are used chiefly as passenger vessels:

KIEV (formerly ISMAIL). This is a former Rumanian ship of about 250 tons, with a 600 h.p. oil burning engine. She is a side-wheeler with a speed of 20 kilometers per hour. She has 40 cabins and can carry 1200 (sic) passengers. She runs between Reni and Bulcov every other day. The ship's personnel numbers about 30. The captain is Sokol Lisvinovic, a Russian from Odessa, age 35; he has served on this ship since 1947 and was promoted from Braila where he had been an inspector.

PETROZOVOTSKY (EUG. ENIA). This was formerly a Rumanian tug and was converted into a passenger boat in 1945. Her displacement is about 100 tons, and she has a 200 h.p., oil burning engine. She is a side-wheeler with a speed of 15 kilometers per hour. She can carry about 250 passengers. She runs between Bulcov and Reni every other day, alternating with the KIEV. In the spring of 1947 the PETROZOVOTSKY was sent to the shipyards at Bucharest for further alterations to fit her for passenger service.

MINSK (formerly TIUTIU). This was formerly a Rumanian ship of 50 tons displacement. She has a 180 h.p. oil burning engine, and a speed of 20 kilometers per hour. She can carry about 200 passengers on the Reni and Bulcov run.

7. The most important tugs are the following:

SARATA, a tug built in the Skoda shops at Komarom (Czechoslovakia) in August 1947. She has a displacement of 200 tons, 1600 h.p. oil burning engines, and a speed of five kilometers per hour when towing 20 loaded barges upstream. The SARATA has a sister ship built in the same shops at the same time. Both of these tugs are used in the rapids of the Danube from kilometer 945 to kilometer 1016.

CONTESSA, about 200 tons, with oil burning engines of 1200 h.p. She was formerly Rumanian. She runs between Turmu Severin and Braila.

KHARKOV (formerly TURAN). She has a displacement of 200 tons and 1200 h.p. engines. Her regular run is through the rapids.

LENINGRAD (formerly the Austrian CENTAUR). She is a 250 ton ship with 2200 h.p. engines. Her run is through the rapids.

SEVASTOPOL (formerly the Austrian CENTAUR). She is a 200 ton ship with 1200 h.p. engines. Her run is through the rapids.

BAIKAL. She is a tanker of 250 tons displacement and has two 1200 h.p. oil engines. She runs between Turmu Severin and Komarom.

KRASNAVOTSKY. She has a displacement of 150 tons, with 600 h.p. oil engines. She runs between Turmu Severin and Braila.

BALHAZ. She has 530 tons displacement with two 100 h.p. engines. She runs between Turmu Severin and Braila.

ONEGA. She has 550 tons displacement with two oil engines of 100 h.p. She runs between Turmu Severin and Braila. In July 1947 she was in the Budapest shops for engine repairs.

ROSTOV. She has a displacement of 50 tons and 350 h.p. motors. She runs between Turmu Severin and Braila.

RZEV (formerly the Rumanian NEGOU). She has 45 tons displacement and 300 h.p. oil burning steam engines. She runs between Braila and Ismail.

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NEVA. She is a 450 h.p. motor barge. She runs between Budapest and Ismail.

BIRYANSK. She is a ship of 450 tons displacement with oil burning steam engines of 350 h.p. She runs between Braila and Ismail.

SELIGER (formerly the ELVETIA of the Meyer-Lloyd Co.). She has a displacement of 450 tons and 300 h.p. oil engines. She is a tanker carrying alcohol from Belgrade to Rani.

NIPRU (formerly the Rumanian ZIU). She has 550 tons displacement and 800 h.p. oil engines. She runs between Moldova Veche and Komarom.

VOLGA (formerly the Rumanian BISTRITA). Of 550 tons displacement and 800 h.p. oil engines. Runs between Turnu Severin and Braila.

ARNULF. She is of German manufacture; of 150 tons displacement with three oil burning engines of 1600 h.p. (total). Until 1945 she was under water at Tiganasi; she was refloated and taken to the shipyards at Budapest where she is now being repaired.

YANISEI (former German PANTESKY). Motor barge of 450 tons displacement; 600 h.p. oil engines. Runs between Turnu Severin and Braila.

SARMISEGETUSA. 150 tons displacement. 1200 h.p. steam engines. In 1945 she was sent to the Dniester River.

PRINCIPELE MIHAI (former Rumanian passenger boat). 300 tons displacement, with two 300 h.p. oil engines. She can carry 800 passengers. In 1945 she was sent to the Dnieper River.

PRINCIPELE MIRCEA (former Rumanian passenger boat). 300 tons displacement with oil burning steam engines of 500 h.p. She can carry 800 passengers. In 1947 she was sent to the Dnieper River.

ARKANTIUS (former Greek LORD BYRON). 80 tons displacement with one steam engine of 350 h.p. with two boilers. In 1945 she was sent to the Dnieper River.

NICOLAE STEFANESCU. 120 tons displacement. Two oil engines of 800 h.p. Runs on the Dniester River.

REGELE FERDINAND. 120 tons with two oil engines of 1200 h.p. Runs on the Dniester River.

VASILE LUPU. Passenger ship of 100 tons displacement. One steam engine of 300 h.p. She can carry 300 passengers. Runs on the Dniester River.

RENI (former Greek MELISSA belonging to the ship owner Aninos).

TAMAN (former German, built in 1942). 150 tons displacement with two oil engines of 600 h.p. She runs between Turnu Severin and Braila. Her captain is Sotirios Bogiatzis, a Greek-Rumanian.

8. The following boats belonged to various Greek shipowners and are now running on the Dniester River:

SALAMIS
SOFIA
JASON
ITHAKI
SMYRNI.

9. The following boats belonged to the Greek ship owner Drakoulis and have been sent to the Dniester River:

KRITI PIEROS
THRAKI EKATONCHIER
ERMIS ZEUS

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10. Barges for the most part are of four types, namely 600, 900, 1500 and 2480 tons. There are about 550 barges, each of them numbered. The numbers which they bear indicate the tonnage as well as the serial number of the ship; the first digits indicate the tonnage, and the last digit or digits the serial numbers, (e.g. No. 1265 indicates 1260 tons and serial number 5. No. 659 indicates 650 tons and serial number 9).

Danube River Danger Points

11. The most dangerous points of the Danube River are said to be the following:

- a. Km. 920-925. The water is shallow, and passage is difficult because of the strong currents.
- b. Km. 860 (Ostrova Mare Island), where many ships were sunk in 1944. They are being raised, but the work is progressing very slowly. It is estimated that about 150 ships were sunk.
- c. Km. 560-572. This stretch is dangerous because there are many islands, and the water is shallow. It is difficult for two ships to pass at this point when the water is low, particularly at km. 570 where a Czechoslovak tug with two barges sank.
- d. Km. 448-490, where there are many sandbanks.
- e. Km. 423-426, where there are ships sunk in 1918.
- f. Km. 390-400. Shallows.
- g. Km. 348. Borta channel.
- h. Km. 336-342, 318-322, 295-266. Shallow water with many islands.

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